



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

WERE THE SPIRITUAL FRANCISCANS MONTANIST HERETICS?

DAVID SAVILLE MUZZEY, PH.D.
New York City

About the middle of the second century there was inaugurated in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire a movement which noisily claimed to be pure and undefiled Christianity; and for two centuries this movement bade dangerous defiance to the solidifying structure of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Montanism was ascetic, prophetic, and chiliastic in its nature. It was not a subtle philosophy like Gnosticism, the contemporaneous plague of the Catholic Fathers. Hence, despite the desperate efforts of the acute logical mind of Tertullian, it could not be vindicated as a refined, esoteric interpretation of Christian doctrine; and it did not succeed, as Gnosticism did, in securing substantial recognition in the system of some of the greatest of the constructive theologians of the third and fourth centuries, notably the Alexandrians. Montanism remained an open foe which it was necessary to *keep* out of the church, while Gnosticism was the insidious poison which it was necessary to *purge* out of the church. Consequently, Montanism has been of minor import in the history of ecclesiastical dogma. Until the evolutionary theory of the nineteenth century gave impulse to the study of origins, revealing the formation of the Catholic church as a very travailing historical process, the Montanist movement failed of respectable treatment at the hands of the ecclesiastical historians. But that lack has been abundantly supplied within the last two generations. The sections treating of Montanism in the *Ecclesiastical Histories* of Neander, Baur, Ritschl, and Schaff, with the special treatises of Schwegeler, de Sayres, Stroehlin, and Bonnwetsch, have given us as complete a presentation of the movement as the scantiness of the sources will allow.

It is not the purpose of this essay to deal primarily with either the sources or the history of the Montanistic heresy. They are of interest here only for the purpose of orientation in the doctrine of the imme-

diate and efficient gift of the Holy Spirit, which was first conspicuously championed by the Montanists, and which was an important article in the program of the Spiritual Franciscans. The Spiritual Franciscans, and not the Montanists, are the subject of the essay. Its standpoint is the mediaeval world of the Roman church of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and not the ancient world of the Roman state of the second and third centuries. It discusses in detail a statement which appears invariably in treatises on Montanism; the statement, namely, that Montanism, though conquered and condemned by the Fathers of the early church, reasserted itself among those Franciscans of the stricter observance called Spirituales. I shall examine the practices and tenets of the Spiritual Franciscans under the three aspects of the Montanistic movement that are most strikingly characteristic—its enthusiastic-prophetic nature, its ascetic-disciplinary regulations, and its antisacerdotal-heretical doctrines.

I. PROPHECY

The most obvious feature of Montanism was its apocalyptic-prophetic character. It claimed to be a revelation new and sudden, a revelation whose proclamation was intrusted to a certain man of Phrygia and two women helpers.¹ The form of the prophecy was wildly ecstatic, the Spirit seizing on the prophet and using him as a passive instrument to give voice to its Delphic utterances.² The substance of the prophecy was no less startling than its form: the end

¹ Eusebius, *Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, IV, 27; V, 16-18; Epiphanius, *Haereses*, XLVIII, 1 ff.; Hippolytus, *Philosophoumena*, VIII, 19. The last-named author says that the Montanists claimed to "learn more from the writings of these prophets than from the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels; and above all the Apostles and every divine gift they set the words of these women." On the statements defaming Montanus' character in Saint Jerome (*Epistola*, 133), Apollonius (in Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 18), and the anonymous writer in Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 16, it is enough to quote Renan's words: "Ce sont là les calomnies ordinaires qui ne manquent jamais sous la plume des écrivains orthodoxes quand il s'agit de noircir les dissidents."—*Marc Aurèle*, p. 214.

² "Behold the man is like a lyre, and I strike upon him like a plectrum; the man sleeps, but I wake. Behold the Lord, that stirreth to ecstasy the hearts of men."—Montanist oracle in Epiphanius, *Haer.*, XLVIII, 4. According to the account of the anonymous writer cited by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, V, 16) Montanus is seized by the Spirit, like the prophets of the Old Testament, and suddenly thrown into a state of ecstatic raving. His oracles end in a flood of incomprehensible jargon (ὡς καὶ λαλεῖν ἐκφρονᾶς καὶ ἀκαιρῶς καὶ ἀλλιοτρόπως).

of the world was at hand;³ the New Jerusalem was about to descend upon the Phrygian villages of Pepuza and Tymion;⁴ the Paraclete promised in the Gospel of John was incarnate in the new prophet,⁵ and had come to inaugurate the perfect kingdom in which only the spotless saints should share.⁶

Unfortunately our knowledge of Montanism in its pristine vigor, in the East, is limited to a few oracles reputed to come from the prophet and his helpers, and to such paragraphs of censure as the later heresy-hunting historians (Eusebius, Epiphanius, Theodoret, Pseudo-Tertullian) deem it important enough to provoke. In the West, in the second generation of its existence, Montanism achieved its greatest triumph by winning to its banner the foremost churchman of the age, the presbyter Tertullian of Carthage.⁷ But the Montanism of Tertullian at the beginning of the third century was a far different thing from the Montanism of the Phrygian prophets of the middle of the second century.⁸ Tertullian was a Puritan of the

³ "And Maximilla the prophetess says, 'After me no more prophets, but the end.'" —Epiph., *Haer.*, XLVIII, 13.

⁴ Epiph., *Haer.*, XLIX, 1; Bonnwetsch, *Geschichte des Montanismus* (Erlangen, 1881), p. 198, Oracle, 9.

⁵ Epiph., *Haer.*, XLVIII, 4, 11: "I am the Lord descended into man;" Didymus, *De Trinitate*, XLI, 1: "Neither angel nor ambassador, but the Lord God have I come."

⁶ Epiph., *Haer.*, XLVIII, 4, 10.

⁷ The Roman church has been at a loss just how to deal with Tertullian. He is revered as a great anti-Gnostic champion of the purity of Catholic doctrine, yet stained with the heresy of Montanism. Jerome naïvely considered that Tertullian was provoked to heresy by the insults of the Roman clergy ("invidia et contumeliis clericorum Romanae ecclesiae ad Montani dogma delapsus," *Catalogus*, 53). The later Catholic apologists simply met the fact of Tertullian's "lapse" on the question of discipline, and called it a "macula." Tertullian's undoubtedly Montanistic writings (composed after the year 201) are: *De Jejunio*, *De Monogamia*, *De Pudicitia*, *De Virginibus Velandis*, *De Fuga in Persecutione*, *De Exhortatione Castitatis* (Bonnwetsch, *Die Schriften Tertullians*). A work of seven books, *On Ecstasy*, mentioned by Jerome, is lost. Some others of the works of Tertullian are often reckoned as Montanistic or *montanisierend*. See Neander's painful *triage* in the *Antignostikus*. Vincent of Lerius finely says of Tertullian's marvelous style: "Quot paene verba tot sententiae, quot sensus tot victoriae."

⁸ Adolf Harnack (*Dogmengeschichte*, I, 392) calls attention to the rapidity with which even the primitive eastern Montanism must have accommodated itself to the demands of the spreading church, tending to justify itself as an evolutionary and not a revolutionary movement. He says, "Wo der Montanismus für uns in das helle Licht der Geschichte tritt, da zeigt er sich bereits als eine gedämpfte wenn auch noch sehr wirksame religiöse Bewegung."

strictest type. His acutely logical mind and his legal training furnished him the means for the development of a theology of the extremest rigor. It was the Montanistic insistence on uncompromising moral sanctity that appealed to him.⁹ The pledge of that moral sanctity was the Paraclete, who was not so much to inaugurate as to restore the perfect state of purity to the world.¹⁰ Neither Montanus nor Phrygia was aught to Tertullian. He would have none of the dithyrambic ambiguities which characterized the Phrygian oracles. And if he still held the awful picture of the impending judgment day before his readers, it was more to compel them to righteousness than to forewarn them of catastrophe. Many a page in his writings proves that, whatever he may say of the immediate end of the world, he has, as a matter of fact, accepted the dogmatic standards of the established Catholic church and joined valiantly in its battle against heresy. Obviously Tertullian, the Catholic Father, with his pen ready to defend the sufficiency of Scripture and the apostolicity of the rule of faith, was not a Montanist of the old school. They had no divine institution besides the New Jerusalem to claim their allegiance, no authority to bow before but the Paraclete's, no past or present system with which to "harmonize" their prophecies. The overshadowing genius of Tertullian has obscured the real character of Montanism (or at least confused the main issue of the Montanists), by shifting the emphasis from highly specialized and localized prophecy (no longer realizable in Tertullian's day) to the justification of a legalistic ethics in the face of an established church. Tertullian is a copious source of undisputed authenticity; but the "Montanism" which he championed was probably no more akin to the doctrine of Montanus than the republicanism of a Lamartine resembled the program of the Mountain.

Now, prophecy entered as a very conspicuous feature into the doctrines of the Spiritual Franciscans. Not only do we find among

⁹ "Nos quos merito spirituales dici facit agnitio spiritualium charismatum; sed psychicis non recipientibus spiritum. . . ."—Tertull., *De Monog.*, I; "Tamquam castigando et castrando, ut ita dixerim, erudimur a Deo saeculo."—Tertull., *De Cultu Feminarum*, II, ix; cf. Tertullian's *De Pudicitia* and *De Monogamia*, *passim*.

¹⁰ "Ut paracletum restitutorem potius sentias . . . quam institutorem."—*De Monog.*, IV; "Contenta erat veritas pacisci cum consuetudine."—*De Virg. Vel.*, III; "Paracletus . . . deductor omnium veritatum."—*De Fuga in Pers.*, XIV.

the zealots, almost at the very inception of the Franciscan movement, that mystic resignation of their case to God which is the chief incentive to vaticination; but from about the middle of the thirteenth century we can trace the enormous influence upon them of the writings of Abbot Joachim of Flora, the Calabrian mystic. The substance of Joachim's genuine prophecies was the perfection of the church in a process of religious evolution which began with Adam and was to culminate about the year 1260 in the triumph of the spiritual over the carnal church. This process was working itself out in three ages: the first began in Adam and reached its fruition in Abraham; the second began in Hosea and reached its fruition in John the Baptist; the third began in St. Benedict of Nursia and was even now coming to its fruition. These ages were typified in Joachim's works by the trinities: servitude, filial obedience, liberty; fear, faith, love; starlight, dawn, day; nettles, roses, lilies; patriarchs, saints, monks; water, oil, wine. In the perfect age impending the Jews were to be converted to Christianity, and the Greeks brought back to the fold of the papal church. The herald and instrument of the perfect age was the "everlasting gospel," intrusted to "an angel flying in the midst of heaven, to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people." This everlasting gospel was the spiritual sense of Christianity, which proceeded from the letter of the Old and New Testaments as the Holy Spirit proceeded from Father and Son.¹¹

In adopting the Joachimite prophecies the Franciscan zealots modified or falsified the original to suit their own purposes. First of all, they treated Joachim's writings as the eternal gospel itself, whereas they were only the commentary on the eternal gospel. By the latter term Joachim understood the new spiritual comprehension of both testaments; not a new gospel but the true interpretation of the old one, not a book but a creed. But the Spiritual Franciscans not only

¹¹ The chief genuine works of the Abbot Joachim of Flora (*Liber concordiae novi et veteris testamenti*, *Psalterium decem chordarum*, *Expositio in Apocalypsin*) were published at Venice, 1517-27. Renan (*Rev. des deux Mondes*, Vol. LXIV) claims that Joachimism was derived from the Greek church, and rests his claim on the fact of the great numbers of Greeks in southern Italy and on the constant elevation of the Greek church above the Latin in the prophecies current in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Tocco also finds an eastern source for Joachimism: "Io son d'avviso che la dottrina di Gioacchino si connette strettamente col Catarismo" (*L'Eresia nel medio Evo* p. 402).

elevated Joachim's writings to a parity with inspired Scripture; they also composed words to which they signed Joachim's name, and in which they made concrete and specific the rather vague, indeterminate prophecies of Joachim's genuine writings.¹² For example, in reference to the Emperor Frederick II, Joachim simply says that the son of Constance will be a great enemy of the church—a prediction safe enough for anybody to make of the son of Henry VI, and grandson of Barbarossa. But the pseudo-Joachitic writings of the Spiritual Franciscans enter into the details of Frederick's contumacy, as it was possible only for one living after the final break of the emperor with Gregory IX (1239).¹³ Furthermore, the Franciscan zealots, following the author of the *Introductorius in Evangelium Aeternum*,¹⁴ introduced St. Francis into the Joachitic program, sometimes substituting him for St. Benedict, and sometimes applying to him the prophecy of the "angel having the sign of the living God."¹⁵ Finally, the author of the *Introductorius* used Joachim's name to sanction an attack on the Roman church, wilfully perverting the meaning of passages in the *Liber Concordiae* (Books II and V, *passim*) which referred to the new order of *virī spirituales* and the triumph of the contemplative over the active life. Salimbene's denunciation of the *Introductorius*, however, shows that such extreme doctrine was by no means acceptable to the Franciscan zealots as a body, and that one

¹² For extended proof of the relation between Joachim's writings, and the eternal gospel as set forth here, see Denifle's article on "Joachim von Floris und die Commission zu Anagni," *Archiv für Literatur- und Kirchengeschichte (A.L.K.G.)*, I, 45-145.

¹³ Cf. Pseudo-Joachite, *Commentarius in Isaiam*, 39-56, for many "vaticinia post eventum" in reference to the Hohenstaufen, the flight of Innocent IV to France in 1243, the split in the College of Cardinals, 1241 and 1270, etc.

¹⁴ Gerhard da Borgo San Donino. The *Introductorius*, published at Paris in 1294, caused more strife probably than any other writing of the thirteenth century. It was a fierce denunciation of the corrupt papal church, and was formally condemned by a papal commission sitting at Anagni (1255). Although repudiated by such well-known Franciscan zealots as Salimbene, the *Introductorius* was nevertheless believed both by the people and by the clergy to be a faithful record of the sentiments of the Franciscan Spirituals. Nevertheless Alexander IV in his condemnation of the book ordered the bishop of Paris to deal circumspectly with the Spirituals, and not to assume the guilt of the whole body of zealots from the adherence of a few to its teachings. (Letter of the pope in D'Argentré, *Coll. judic.*, I, 166.)

¹⁵ "Illum angelum qui habuit signum Dei vivi, qui apparuit circa MCC incarnationis Dominice, quem angelum frater Girardus vocat et confitetur sanctum Franciscum."—Process at Anagni, Denifle, *loc. cit.*, 91b.

might be a good Joachite without falling into the fatuous heresies of Gerhard.¹⁶

We know that in some quarters the stricter brothers of the Franciscan order adopted the prophecies of Joachim before the middle of the thirteenth century. Salimbene speaks frequently in his discursive *Chronicle* of the adherents of the Calabrian Abbot in Provence and Italy, naïvely confessing his own faith in the oracles, until the untimely death of Frederick II, who was cast for the rôle of Antichrist, upset all his calculations.¹⁷ The *Chronicle of the XXIV Generals* tells us of a group of brothers in Crescentius' day (1244-48) who "ascribed everything to the Spirit."¹⁸ And William of St. Amour, in his bitter invective against the Minorites of Paris (1254), says that "for fifty-five years certain persons have been laboring to convert the Gospel of Christ into another Gospel, which they say will be more perfect."¹⁹ But these are all vague allegations that offer no hold for critical study.²⁰ It was only with the appearance of Gerhard's *Intro-*

¹⁶ Salimbene characterizes the *Introductorius* as containing "verba frivola et risu digna," and "multas falsitates contra doctrinam abbatis Joachim, quas abbas non scripserat."—*Fra Salimbene Parmensis ordinis nimirum Chronica*, ed. Parma, 1857, pp. 233, 236.

¹⁷ Salimbene, *Chron.*, pp. 102, 107, 133, 207, 227. The genial author tells us how when he confessed his unwillingness at first to believe that Frederick was dead, Fra Gherardino of Parma rebuked him, exclaiming, "Well, you know it now; so drop your Joachim and apply yourself to wisdom." In another passage Salimbene tells us of an abbot who used to hide behind his monastery to read Joachim.

¹⁸ "Qui ad libitum vivebant et omnia Spiritui tribuebant."—*A.L.K.G.*, II, 256.

¹⁹ *De Periculis novissimorum Temporum*, ed. Paris, 1632, p. 38.

²⁰ Tocco is certainly exceeding the justification of his sources when he speaks of Joachites in the generalate of Elias (1232-39), and says that from this time "il partito intransigente cominciara a prendere il nome di Spirituali conforme alle idee di Gioacchino," *op. cit.*, p. 438. The name "Spirituales" as a party name was not used in the thirteenth century at all. The very commonplace phrases, "spiritualiter ambulare" and "regulam spiritualiter observare," which occur in the Rule of St. Francis do not point to a distinct sect of his followers, of course. Ehrle has collected a number of instances, from the thirteenth century where even the phrase "viri spirituales" means only "devout men" (*A.L.K.G.*, III, 600, 601). So the expression was neither new nor unique in the Franciscan order. It was probably the fierce persecutions of the last years of the thirteenth century and the early years of the fourteenth in Italy and Provence that led to the use of the word "Spirituales" as the name of a sect. We find the zealots of Provence, for example, in 1316 protesting that "they never have wished to be called 'Spirituales,' but only that name which Francis himself had given them, namely, 'Fratres Minores.'" Ubertino da Casale about the same time (1310) acknowledges that the

ductorius in 1254 that Joachimism became an important issue, if not the chief issue, in the prosecution of the zealots. The tribunal of Paris, before which John of Parma and his associates were tried after John's deposition from the generalate, regarded sympathy with the teachings of the Calabrian seer as the chief cause of all their offending.²¹ The Council of Arles (1263 cir.) ordered the destruction of Joachim's writings.²² Thenceforward we find in every complaint of the Community against every branch of the Spirituals the recurring charge of sympathy with the prophecies (meaning, generally, the pseudo-prophecies) of Joachim of Flora. The records of the Inquisition abound with such charges.²³ Angelo, Olivi, Conrad of Offida, Ubertino da Casale, are all obnoxious to the accusation of Joachimism.²⁴ The gift of prophecy was carried back to the early zealots, to John of Parma, to Leo, and even to St. Francis himself.²⁵

We shall now examine the prophecy of the Franciscan zealots a name is used to denote a small sect in Italy ("Reply to Community," Ehrle, III, 22a). We might indicate the real significance of the word by speaking of the "spiritual part" of the Franciscans in the thirteenth century, and the "spiritual party" of the Franciscans in the fourteenth century.

²¹ "Tandem ventum est ad ancusationum omnium caput praecipuum, et interrogatum quid sentirent de Joachimo abbato eiusve doctrina."—Wadding, *Annales Minorum Ad Ann.*, 1256, No. 5.

²² In 1263; cf. Denifle, *A.L.K.G.*, I, 46.

²³ *Lib. Sent. Inq. Thol.*, *passim*. Ehrle has published in the *A.L.K.G.*, Vol. IV., some proceedings of the Minorite inquisitors against the Spirituals in Italy, taken from a manuscript (*Vat. Cod.*, 4029) discovered by himself. In a trial in the year 1334 a brother of the Fraticelli confesses: "quod habetur una profecia quod ecclesia Romana facta est meretrix" (fol. 75a).

²⁴ See letter of Angelo to the pope and the Community, Ehrle, *A.L.K.G.*, I, especially p. 560. For Conrad and Ubertino, see *Hist. Trib.*, 52a, 60a; *A.L.K.G.*, II, 305 ff. For Olivi, the accusation of the Community before Clement V (March, 1311): "Et falsas prophetias de ecclesia dixit, scripsit, et docuit . . . et maxime in Postilla quam scripsit super Apocalypsin . . . et quod fuit eidem a Spiritu sancto revelata."—"Olivi's Apology," *A.L.K.G.*, III, 418-21. Wadding says of Olivi: "in eadem Postilla veneni aliquid loco mellis suxerit ex Joachim Expositione in Joannem."—*Ad Ann.*, 1325, No. 24.

²⁵ For the elaborate prophecy attributed to John of Parma, see *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 59b; Ehrle, *loc. cit.* On the appearance to the sect of Segarelli, Leo is made to exclaim, "Illi sunt illi Sathane apostoli, quos pater noster sanctus Franciscus praedixit esse venturos: Ve mundo, quoniam undique scandala consurgant ex quo tales apparuerunt apostoli."—*Hist. Trib.*, fol. 60b. See also a long prophecy attributed to St. Francis by Angelo da Clarino in a letter to Philip of Majorca in 1329, Ehrle, *A.L.K.G.*, I, 566.

little more closely, to determine whether it can fairly be called Montanistic in its character. We shall examine (a) its nature; (b) its content; (c) its form; and (d) the circumstances attendant on its appearance.

a) The Montanistic prophecy was immediate, not telic. It was coterminous with Christianity, or, more strictly speaking, it claimed to be Christianity itself first revealed in its perfect form. Hence the language of finality in Montanus' oracles: "I am the Lord God, all-powerful, come down to man;" "I am neither messenger nor envoy but Lord God the Father;" "I am the Father, Son, and Paraclete."²⁶ The church of the second century had not yet set a bound to immediate inspiration. Prophecy, the spirit of Jahveh which seized and overpowered the chosen instruments of the Old Testament revelation (Amos 7:15), was still recognized as a gift of the new dispensation, "gratia gratis data" (II Peter 1:21; I Cor. 14:3; Rom. 12:6). Justin the Martyr, Hermas, Irenaeus—all contemporaries of Montanus, and men of note in the early church—recognize the gift of prophecy as original, divine inspiration.²⁷ It was not until the end of the second century, and largely as a direct result of the bold use of prophecy by the Montanists, that the church disallowed the continuance of the "divine gift," except for the inoffensive purposes of healing the sick and driving out demons. It limited inspiration to the apostles.²⁸ As the church solidified, providing in its decrees a complete rule of faith and conduct and furnishing in such works as Augustine's and Gregory the Great's a final program for the progress of history, all that was left to "prophecy" was the subordinate rôle of noting the signs and conditions of the triumph of that program. By the very nature of the case, then, "prophecy" in the Middle Ages, so long as

²⁶ Epiph., *Haer.*, XLVIII, 11; Didymus, *De Trin.*, XLI, 1.

²⁷ Justin (*Dial. cum Tryph.*, 82) says that the charisma which was bestowed upon the Hebrew prophets was continued in the prophets of Christianity. For Hermas, see *Mand.*, XI, 8; *Vis.*, III, 11. For Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, I, 13, 3; II, 49, 3; V, 6, 1. Schwegler has even claimed Irenaeus as a Montanist on the ground of his warm championship of the prophetic gift in the church (III, 11, 9), and even Harnack declares that in such passages Irenaeus is *montanisierend* (*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, III, 371, n. 2).

²⁸ "The signs of the Holy Spirit were numerous immediately after the ascension of Jesus; later they became fewer, and now there are only traces of them among the few whose hearts are cleansed by the Logos."—Origen, *Adv. Cels.*, VII, 337.

it did not set itself in opposition to traditional dogma, was not a vehicle of revelation at all, but a mere form of exegesis.²⁹

Now the Franciscan prophecy was purely ethical in its motive, an instrument of reform. It was called forth by the persecutions suffered by the minority of the brothers, who remained faithful to the literal interpretation of the Rule of St. Francis. Joachim of Flora, in the interest of the reform of the church of the twelfth century, had expounded the Apocalypse and found the harmony of the Old and New Testaments in the prediction of a new world-era in which the spiritual sense of the Scriptures was to be realized in a spiritual priesthood. That was exactly the doctrine to comfort the persecuted Franciscan zealots. They adopted it, adapted it, heightened it, falsified it to suit the Franciscan program, and used it both for a solace to themselves and a warning to the lax Community.³⁰ Prophecy, then, with the Franciscans was only a means to an end. It was not original but something grafted upon the faith delivered them by St. Francis. They were driven to it by persecution, and probably would have abandoned it willingly had peace been restored to their party and purity to the order. In all this the Franciscan prophecy differed utterly from the Montanistic prophecy, which was original, immediate, and final.

b) The content of the Franciscan prophecy also differed widely from Montanism. The latter announced the immediate descent of the New Jerusalem upon the Phrygian villages of Pepuza and Tymion, called for the dissolution of earthly ties even to the severance of the marriage relation, that the faithful might be gathered to the scene of the cataclysmic Parousia, ordained strict fasts and ascetic practices,

²⁹ It is interesting to note the struggle in Tertullian to harmonize the conception of Montanism as a revelation with the established rule of faith. He lived at a time when the church had formulated its standards, and he accepted them. The ingenious means he hit upon for the reconciliation of a new revelation with an old creed was the theory of progressive revelation, corresponding to successive stages of world-development—a perfectible, but always continuous, process. It was the same device as was employed by Joachim in his trinities of types, and in fact the only device possible for those who are in Tertullian's and Joachim's situation. Cf. Tertull., *De Virg. Vel.*, 1.

³⁰ That this process began in the generalate of John of Parma (1247-57) is indicated by the fact of the publication of the *Introductorius* (1254) and by the introduction of Joachim into the trial of John of Parma. Wadding says John was censured, "nimium tribuens Joachimo abbati," *Ad Ann.*, 1256, No. 5.

condemned second marriage, and praised virginity as the ideal state.³¹ They celebrated mysterious rites at Pepuza, of which a picturesque bit is preserved to us in Epiphanius: "Virgins clad in white and bearing torches marched into the assembly to prophesy, and, rousing their audience to a frenzy of religious excitement, they placed themselves at the head of a procession which hastened out to do penance amid weepings and wailings."³² There was a spontaneity in their prophetic celebrations which reminds one of the response of Europe to the preachers of the First Crusade.

The burden of the Joachitic prophecy as adopted by the Franciscans, on the other hand, was the emergence of a spiritual hierarchy in a church already forever established. There was no call for the faithful to come out from the communion of Rome and form a new religion. The Holy Catholic church, though "wounded in the house of its friends," was still the inviolable purveyor of divine grace. The authority of the prophet was never invoked for the ordination of new fasts or the multiplication of penances. The Rule and Testament of St. Francis contained the sum and substance of the law, and it was only for their faithful observance that the zealots asked. The Joachitic prophecies were used by such men as Olivi and Angelo rather as a counsel of patience than as a summons to revolt. Unfortunately we have hardly any details of the Joachitic tenets held by the leaders of the Spiritual Franciscans. The *Postil on the Apocalypse* by Olivi probably contained the substance of their doctrine, but that work has been lost. The report of the examination of Gerhard's *Introductorius* by the commission at Anagni (1255) is preserved in a manuscript of the Sorbonne (No. 1,726). It has been published, with a magnificent introduction by Denifle.³³ This report charges the author of the *Introductorius* with manifest and scandalous heresies, namely: "that the doctrine of Joachim excels the doctrine of Christ;" "that the New Testament is superseded by the Eternal Gospel, as the Old Testament was superseded by the New;" "that the Gospel of Christ never leads anyone to perfection;" "that the Greeks live more after the Spirit

³¹ Apollonius, in Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 18; Hippolytus, *Phil.*, VIII, 19; Epiphanius, *Haer.*, XLVIII, 9; and (so far as the ethical clauses go) Tertullian, *passim*.

³² Epiph., *Haer.*, XLIX, 2.

³³ In the *A.L.K.G.*, I, 1-45.

than the Latins;" "that Christ and his Apostles were not perfect in the contemplative life;" and many like blasphemies. But we have seen that the *Introductorius*, even if this be a fair representation of its contents, was by no means a fair expression of the views of the Spirituals, even of the pronounced Joachimites.³⁴ From the accusations of the Community and the papal agents, as well as from the records of the Inquisition, we get only the general complaint of "Joachimism" against the Spirituals. So we must judge by an analysis of works like the *Historia Septem Tribulacionum*, the defense of the zealots before Clement V by Ubertino da Casale, the *Quaestiones* of Olivi, and other fragments of the writings of the Spirituals which we have preserved in the Chronicles, whether their prophecy was revolutionary or not. In a careful study of these works I have been unable to discover anything that could be called subversive of the church or of the Order, anything theatrical in their conception of the introduction of the age of the Spirit, any frenzied cults or crass chiliasm.

c) Again, the form of the Franciscan prophecy differed so completely from the Montanistic enthusiasm that we can hardly speak of the one as the continuation or revival of the other. Neander, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, published nearly a century ago, was the first historian to recognize the ethnic influence in Montanism. He traced the whole movement to the Phrygian character, which we discover in the old nature religion of Phrygia and the ecstasies of the priests of Cybele and Bacchus.³⁵ Although he emphasized this element too much, and himself modified his extreme views in the next edition of his work,³⁶ still it was a suggestion of great value in the estimation of the real character of Montanism, and has been duly appreciated by later writers on the subject (Baur, Schweigler, Ritschl, Renan). We have already quoted passages from the *Oracles* of Montanus, showing the ecstatic form of the Montanistic prophecy.³⁷ The sentences preserved by ancient writers and collected by Bonnwetsch in the appendix to his valuable essay on Montanism³⁸ are all of the concise,

³⁴ See above, note 16.

³⁵ Neander, *Allgemeine Geschichte der christlichen Religion und Kirche*, 1827.

³⁶ Second ed., Hamburg, 1843, II, 877-908.

³⁷ See above, notes 2 and 5.

³⁸ G. N. Bonnwetsch, *Die Geschichte des Montanismus*, Erlangen, 1881.

inconsequent sort that characterize the Delphic utterances of the Sibyl. Epiphanius, who understood Montanism better than any other of its early critics, and who is our source for most of the information we have of Montanism in the east (i. e., primitive Montanism), constantly addresses his polemic against this crypto-hierophantic character of the *Oracles*, as if that were the chief offense of the sect.³⁹

Now we find, to be sure, a few passages in the writings of the Spiritual Franciscans which indicate a sympathy with the mystic-ecstatic view of prophecy. There is a long passage of total obscurity, for example, filled with algebraic *x*'s and *y*'s, inserted in the sixth *Tribulation* of Angelo da Clarino.⁴⁰ We hear from the same source of a certain brother Girard, who paused in the midst of a sermon in the market-place of Constantinople, and, with eyes raised in rapt contemplation to heaven, exclaimed: "Now is the eagle taken!" Regaining his normal senses, he explained that the divine oracle meant that King Louis of France had been captured by the Saracens. And so it proved, at the very hour in which Girard had spoken.⁴¹ We read, again, of a brother, Jacobus da Massa, who, in the days of John of Parma, entered into a trance, and remained insensible to the world for three days, until the brothers began to fear that he was dead;⁴² and how Brother Conrad of Offida "in his youth was often found raised bodily from the earth and suspended while in the act of prayer."⁴³ Finally, the *Index* of Raymond of Fronciacho has a chapter in which are contained the confessions of Brother Francis (of Borgo San Sepulcro? de Lutra?), the prophet, who says that the Holy Spirit inspires in some the way of perfection, and they who are led by the angel of light reach the deepest serenity of spirit, and attain

³⁹ Here again we must not let the copious and cogent eloquence of Tertullian deceive us as to the original spirit of Montanism. He paid tribute to that spirit in a few phrases like "excidere sensu," "amentia rapi" (*Adv. Marc.*, IV, 22; *De Anima*, IX); but his whole interest lay in the work, not in the advent of the Paraclete. The immense distance between Tertullian and Montanus is shown by such a passage as the following: "Quae est ergo Paracleti administratio, nisi haec, quod disciplina dirigitur, scripturae revelantur, intellectus reformatur, ad meliora proficitur" (*De Virg. Vel.*, 1). What were "Scripture," intellect," and "progress" to Montanus!

⁴⁰ *Hist. Trib.*, foll. 63b-65a; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

⁴¹ *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 34a; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

⁴² *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 38a; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

⁴³ *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 52a; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

the heights of virtue with the blessed apostle Paul, who was caught up into the third heaven.⁴⁴

These incidents, however, are not at all characteristic of the prophecy of the Spiritual Franciscans. As prophecy with the Franciscans subserved an ethical end and its purpose was, like the Paraclete's with Tertullian, to reveal the character of a new and perfect age; so its form was didactic rather than ecstatic. Joachim's names for the church and the saints of the third age all have a flavor of repose in them: the church is to be an "ecclesia contemplantium" or "ecclesia contemplativa;" the saints are an "ordo justus," "sapiens, spiritualis," a "populus spiritualis," "viri spirituales." The Spirit is the teacher who is to prepare the saints for the new age as well as the agent who is to inaugurate the new age for the saints. He is not the Paraclete of the Montanists, who "stirs the hearts of men to ecstasy" and robs them of their senses.

d) Finally, the circumstances attendant on the Montanistic prophecy were particularistic in the extreme. Its lone trinity of prophets, its pompous glorification of a country village of Phrygia, its hard and fast ceremonial rules, all made it incapable of becoming a world-movement. In fact, the very design of Montanism was to be a wholly extramundane phenomenon. Its goal was the end of history. The New Jerusalem was not a state to be attained by a long process of world-development, but was suddenly to be let down from the skies above Pepuza. Already Tertullian felt the awkwardness of these particularistic features. He never mentions Montanus or Pepuza. He defends the ecstatic state with only faint ardor. For him the criterion of Christianity is, to be sure, as with Montanus, the reception of the Paraclete; but a Paraclete who is the guide to all virtue ("deductor omnium virtutum"), rather than the plectrum that strikes the lyre (above, note 2).⁴⁵ He explains ecstasy as simply the "over-shadowing of man by divine virtue."⁴⁶

Among the Franciscans there was no return to the particularism of the Montanistic prophecy. Olivi is clearly the one commanding

⁴⁴ *Index* of Raymond of Fronciacho, Pars II, chap. xx; Ehrle, *A.L.K.G.*, III, 11, 12.

⁴⁵ "Et nos quidem agnitio Paracleti . . . disjunxit a Psychicis."—Tert., *Adv. Prax.*, 1.

⁴⁶ "Cum per ipsum hominem Deus loquitur necesse est excidat sensu, obumbratus scilicet virtute divina."—Tert., *Adv. Marc.*, IV, 22.

figure of the Spirituals, and yet he cannot be thought of as in any way a parallel to Montanus. During the synchronous interregnum in the generalate and the papacy (1314-16) the zealots had full control of the monasteries of Narbonne and Béziers; yet there was no attempt to elaborate a legalistic code of ethics or to institute new fasts. There were strong groups of Spirituals in various localities in Italy and Provence; yet we do not hear of any of these localities as the scene of the near descent of the New Jerusalem.

It seems scarcely justifiable, then, in the light of this complete diversity in point of motive, content, form, and attendant circumstances, to run the Franciscan prophecy in a parallel with Montanism. The bare fact that there was a body of prophecy in the two instances is of little consequence. In Montanus' day, as we have already noted, prophecy was still recognized by the great lights of the church—a Justin, a Hermas, a Papias, an Irenaeus. It was the common form for teaching to take, even diabolical teaching.⁴⁷ And in the later Middle ages, after the mind of Europe had been roused to some degree of self-inspection through the introduction of Arabic learning, the cosmopolitan influence of the Crusades, the stimulus of trade and industry, prophecy became a common medium both for voicing the hopes of a long-suffering Christian peasantry and for scoring the sins of the Roman *curia*. It pictured the last of the seven epochs prefigured in the seven days of creation as at hand. The judgments of God were to be realized. Empire and papacy, both sunken in iniquity, were to crumble away, and on their ruins was to appear a new nation of God, illuminated from on high, living in poverty and purity. Then the divine mysteries should be revealed, the Holy Spirit should shed abroad on the people the dew of his wisdom and holiness, peace should reign over a regenerate world, and the angels should return with confidence to dwell among men.⁴⁸ The language of the prophets was unsparing: 'Woe, for the world hath become darkness. The Lord's vine hath shriveled and there is none to care for it. The head

⁴⁷ "Not every one that speaketh in the spirit is a prophet, but only he who has the character of the Lord."—*Didache*, XI, 8. "Prove every man that hath the spirit by his life," Herm., *Mand.*, XI, 7. St. Paul would have had a "pneumatic church," in which the Spirit was the constant factor in the life of each Christian. Cf. Gunkel, *Die Wirkungen des heiligen Geistes*.

⁴⁸ Roth, *Die Visionen der heiligen Elisabeth von Schönaue* (1884), p. 115. ...

of the church is ill, and its members are dead. Shepherds of my church, ye sleep, but I will wake you."⁴⁹ Such was the language of prophecy a full generation before the appearance of Joachim of Flora or Saint Francis of Assisi. There is not one of the manifold sects of the high Middle Ages that is free from this mania of prophesying. It was more common to foretell the history of the future than to write the history of the past.

For the modern world prophecy has ceased to be a respectable employment, and we are tempted to class in the same calendar of frauds all agencies or mediums that claim to reveal the future. The very fact of prediction itself seems so monstrous to us that it matters little who claims to prophesy or what the content of the prophecy is. But we miss the whole significance of mediaeval prophecy if we treat it from the modern point of view. We must reverse the glasses through which we look on history, turning the long view upon the future and the short view upon the past. Then we are in the spirit to appreciate such a movement as Joachimism, for example, in its full significance, to seek its provocation, and study its purpose. Studied so, the movement appears neither "eccentric" nor "phantastic,"⁵⁰ but simply as a very ingenious piece of exegesis in the interest of ecclesiastical reform. If it took on some less worthy features in the hands of the Spiritual Franciscans,⁵¹ it still retained, nevertheless, its substantial character as a process of history whose goal was the transformation of a church corrupted by worldly ends and bestial sins into a community of saints. The ecstatic element is almost entirely absent, replaced by the contemplative.⁵² The program is free from offensive particularism. To be sure, it proclaimed the dawn of a third and perfect age, the dispensation of the Spirit to succeed the dispensations of the Father (Old Testament) and the Son (New Testament). But this idea of the perfectibility of Christianity was by no means exclusively Mon-

⁴⁹ Extract from the prophecies of St. Hildegard of Bingen (twelfth century); quoted by Sabatier, *Vie de Saint François d'Assise*, Eng. transl., p. 52.

⁵⁰ "Jenes (das Evang. Aet.) mochte Manchen an das excentrisch-phantastische des Montanismus erinnern."—Reuter, *Aufklärung im Mittelalter*, II, 207.

⁵¹ See above, notes 12, 13, 16.

⁵² "Est igitur totius rationis summa quod contemplatio ex suo genere perfectior est omni alia actione."—Olivi in Ehrle, *A.L.K.G.*, III, 503.

tanistic, or more strictly, Tertullianistic.⁵³ It was part of the legacy of neo-Platonism to the Christian church, and appeared frequently in the works of the most orthodox of the churchmen who are touched with the platonic spirit.⁵⁴

We conclude then, that the Joachitic prophecy of the Spiritual Franciscans had little or nothing in it to recall the wild dithyrambic oracles of the Phrygian Montanus; and we proceed to examine the two movements from another point of view, namely, their enthusiastic-ascetic character.

II. ASCETICISM

It was a question of morals, not of dogma or ritual, that caused the Spiritual Franciscans to break away from the Order. From the time when Bernard of Quinteville and Brother Leo retired from the evil counsels of the generalate of Elias (1232-39), to wait in solitude deliverance from heaven, to the days when Ubertino da Casale and Angelo da Clarino presented their apologies to the pontiff at Avignon, nearly a century later, the evidence from both friends and enemies of the zealots shows clearly that it was the failure of the order at large to observe the Rule and Testament of St. Francis that drove the zealots to revolt. As early as the generalate of Crescentius da Jesi (1244-48), if we may trust the author of the *Historia Septem Tribulacionum*, the abuse of the moral code inculcated by St. Francis was shocking.

There were in those days [he says] men of incomparable sanctity among the brethren . . . who grieved and lamented over the flood of evils and the enormous laxity which had undone the primitive purity of the order. Seeing, therefore, that in the place of the pure observance of the Rule there had possessed the brothers a great thirst for wealth and craze for fine buildings, that prayer was abandoned for the subtle and sterile science of Aristotle, and the syllogisms of logic more eagerly conned than the words of divine wisdom, that great and small alike received the learning of the schools as a new revelation—these men, taught in the spirit of St. Francis, decided to have recourse to the supreme pontiff.⁵⁵

⁵³ *De Virg. Vel.*, I.

⁵⁴ "Fide credimus trium legum tempora, scilicet naturae, scripturae, et gratiae, sibi succedere et ordinatissime decurrisse. In primo potentiam, in secundo providentiam, in tertio justitiam. . . . Efficitur noster spiritus hierarchicus."—St. Bonaventura, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, chaps. i, iv, ed. Hefele, Tübingen, 1860. Comparing with these words of the great Catholic scholastic the sentences of Olivi, we are tempted to apply to the latter the trenchant remark of Pascal in his third *Lettre Provinciale*: "Cette proposition serait catholique dans une autre bouche."

⁵⁵ *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 29a; Ehrle, *A.L.K.G.*, II, 258.

The fate of the seventy-two brothers who undertook this mission to Pope Innocent IV was harsh. They were sent in pairs to distant lands.⁵⁶ Crescentius' successor, John of Parma, tried to set a bound to the rising flood of worldliness in the order, and for his reward was deposed from the generalate.⁵⁷ His successor, Bonaventura, though chosen as a *persona grata* to the Community, was obliged, at the very opening of his term of office, to write a severe letter of warning against the "luke-warm and undevout, who were wise after the flesh."⁵⁸ Wadding, who was a determined enemy of all schismatic tendencies in the order, though a partisan of the strict observance, gives us a long list of abuses against "holy poverty" which had invaded the convents during the generalate of Acquasparta (1287-89).⁵⁹ The exaction of money for every priestly service, the sale of masses, "more presbyterorum saecularium," the collection of funds at the church doors, the decay of the missionary spirit, the refusal of the brothers to leave the comforts and luxuries of their homes, the abandonment of primitive hermitages for elegant chapter houses, were some of the practices which prompted the zealots of the Mark of Ancona to seek the restoration of the ideal of St. Francis in dismissal from the order which bore his name.⁶⁰ Other testimonies to the degeneracy of the order may be read in Salimbene's, Jordan of Giano's, and Thomas of Eccleston's *Chronicles*.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Wadding, *Ad. Ann.*, 1244, No. 1.

⁵⁷ Wadding, *Ad. Ann.*, 1256, No. 2.

⁵⁸ Wadding, *loc. cit.*; Bonaventura was a mystic and came to the generalate with rather advanced "spiritual" ideas. But when he saw tendencies toward schism encouraged in the ranks of the radical "spirituals" he receded from the position taken in the accusatory epistle, and, like Pius IX in the papal chair after the flight to Gaeta, became a sturdy champion of the established order.

⁵⁹ Dante contrasts Acquasparta with the famous zealot Ubertino da Casale. He makes Bonaventura, who holds the balance between the two, say:

Ma non fia da Casal nè d'Acquasparta
Là onde vengon tali alla Scrittura
Chè l'un la fugge, e l'altro la coarta.

—*Paradiso*, XII, 123-26.

Matthew Paris, an enemy of the Mendicants, in his *Chronica Angliae*, p. 46, says that "monks of the orders of St. Benedict and St. Augustine did not stray so far from the path of righteousness in centuries as the new orders (of Dominic and Francis) in thirty years." It was just thirty years after St. Francis' death when John of Parma fell.

⁶⁰ Wadding, *Ad. Ann.*, 1289, No. 23.

⁶¹ Salimbene, ed. Parma (1857), pp. 407, 410; Jordan, *Memorabilia*, ed. Voigt (1870), chaps. 61-63; Thomas of Eccleston, *De Adventu Minorum in Angliam*, coll. 12.

If we turn to the petitions and apologies of the zealots themselves, we find there the same insistence on the moral issue. When the Fraticelli of the Mark of Ancona sought from Celestin V the privilege of living the strict life of poverty apart from the order, the pope "accepted [their] petition; and in the presence of all the court received [their] vows; and ordered [them] to observe the will and mandates of St. Francis sincerely, even adding to the rigor of the Rule and Testament."⁶² Ubertino da Casale in his defense of the Spirituals (especially Olivi) before Clement V, in 1311, insists again and again that the whole trouble in the order has been caused by the fact that those in positions of influence, the

prelates, lectors, confessors, and the like, have so led the brothers astray that hardly a handful can be found who will abstain from luxuries, wearing cheap, patched tunics, and going without shoes, like the first brethren and the blessed Francis⁶³ . . . and such a business is carried on for the gain of such delicacies that to many it seems as if all the spiritual offices of the order were rated at a price.⁶⁴

Ubertino's testimony is rendered all the more credible by the fact that he shows the moderation, rare in modern times and almost undiscoverable in the Middle Ages, of conceding some virtue to the opposite party.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Angelo da Clarino, in his long letter of apology tendered to John XXII in 1317, protests that he has never been a heretic, "unless perchance it is a heresy to believe, confess, love, and practice, with steadfastness and charity, what St. Francis professed in his Rule, taught in his life, loved in his death, and commanded in his will."⁶⁶

⁶² Angelo da Clarino, *Epistola Excusatoria*, fol. 141b; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

⁶³ Ubertino da Casale, *Responsio ad Communitatem*; Ehrle, III, pp. 56 ff.: "Et plurium vita magistrorum, ministrorum, custodum, est nimis excessiva in varietate vinorum, carniurn, piscium, et specierum" (spices).

⁶⁴ *Responsio*, *loc. cit.*, p. 105.

⁶⁵ "Non autem quoad praedicta [objurgations] totam ordinis multitudinem volo temerarie condemnare . . . nam quidam . . . parati essent aliter vivere si eis aliud mandaretur."—*Responsio*, *loc. cit.*, p. 85. We have no way of discovering the amount of sympathy with the high ideals of the Spirituals which existed in the order at large, but were either suppressed by misrepresentation of the officials or timidly abandoned for fear of heretical complications. How thoroughly the Community succeeded in diverting the mind of the pope and the church from moral to theological interest in the zealots is proved by the case of Olivi.

⁶⁶ Angelo da Clarino, *Epistola Excusatoria*, fol. 138b; Ehrle, *loc. cit.* Compare the beautiful Pauline statement of the ideal life of the Spirit in a private letter of Angelo's

Finally the testimony of opponents and accusers is unanimous in the emphasis which it puts upon the ascetic pretensions of the zealots. "Se aliis meliores reputantes," is the cry of the Community against the Spirituals from Crescentius' day down. That they would overthrow the authority of Rome "sub pallio sanctitatis," is the charge of their opponents before the pope's commission at Avignon.⁶⁷

St. Francis in his Rule had absolutely forbidden the brothers to receive money for any service in any place under any conditions, adding that they "ought to regard silver as of no more worth than stones."⁶⁸ But the order, under the fiction of holding funds in trust for the Roman see,⁶⁹ had amassed wealth and acquired valuable realty all over Europe. St. Francis in his Testament had forbidden the brothers to solicit or accept any favors from the pope, "directly or indirectly, for church or convent, or even for personal protection."⁷⁰ Yet the pages of Wadding teem with papal decrees and letters touching the order, and Potthast's *Regesta*⁷¹ contains over fifty bills of privileges and exemptions granted the Minorities before the end of the thirteenth century. St. Francis had enjoined humility of spirit, simplicity of life and worship, caution against the pride of learning, and constant readiness for mutual service.⁷² But the order had hardened into a great institution with its hierarchy of ministers, provincials, custodians, each jealous of his utmost authority; had builded magnificent churches like the basilicas of St. Francis in Assisi, Santa Croce in Florence, St. Fortunatus in Todi, and St. Antony in Padua; had entered the competition with Dominicans for chairs of theology in the universities; and in the place of readiness for gratuitous services of love had substituted a scale of prices for divine offices.

to his Roman companions during the former's residence in Avignon: "Caelestia quarere spiritualia desiderare, terrena despicere, et extendere ad ea quae sunt ante et quae retro sunt oblivisci;" Ehrle, I, 561.

⁶⁷ "Zur Vorgeschichte des Concils von Wien," Ehrle, in *A.L.K.G.*, III, 1-195.

⁶⁸ *Rule of 1221* (wrongly printed in Wadding, *Ad. Ann.*, 1210; cf. Müller, *Die Anfänger, des Minoritenordens und der Bussbruderschaften*, p. 189), chap. 8.

⁶⁹ Bull, *Ordinem vestrum*, of Innocent IV, 1245.

⁷⁰ Testament printed in full in Sabatier's *Vie de St. François* (Eng. transl.), pp. 337-39.

⁷¹ *Regesta Pontificum*, 1198-1303.

⁷² *Rule of 1221*, chaps. 6, 11, 14, 15, 17, 22.

We are not concerned directly with the question of either the necessity or the explanation of this rapid change in the ideals of the Franciscans. Ehrle, in reply to Müller's arraignment of the church of Rome for the degeneracy of the order, argues laboriously that, although abuses did enter the Order, it was not the fault of the church, but rather in spite of the church, and that St. Francis could never have wished his brethren to remain in the cramped quarters of the hermitage which sufficed them as a little company of pioneers.⁷³ But, nevertheless, it is certain that the papal glosses of the Rule⁷⁴ and the papal privileges which opened the way for the establishment of the Minorite institution in the mediaeval world, were in direct contravention of the written orders of St. Francis. What his own attitude would have been had he lived to see the incredible growth of the order which came within a generation of his death,⁷⁵ is purely a matter of surmise. But surely the opinion of his companion, Brother Leo, and his disciples Angelo and Ubertino, is of greater weight than that of a modern Jesuit scholar on this point.

Our present interest, however, in the enthusiastic-ascetic program of the Spiritual Franciscans, is to inquire whether it can fairly be called a manifestation or a recrudescence of Montanism in the church. At first sight it seems as if we must reply in the affirmative. Both Montanism and the Spiritual Franciscan movement were protests against the worldliness arising from the rapid spread and consequent modification of an ideal of singular simplicity, embodied in a personality of compelling force. Both proscribed luxury and learning. Both looked to the apocalyptic consummation of their hopes in the inauguration of the reign of the saints on earth. Yet when we examine a little more closely into the motive and purpose of

⁷³ Ehrle, "Zur Beurtheilung der Umgestaltung des Ordus," *A.L.K.G.*, III, 568 ff.

⁷⁴ Gregory IX's *Quo Elongati*, 1230; Innocent IV's *Ordinem vestrum*, 1245; Nicolas III's *Exiit qui seminat*, 1279.

⁷⁵ In a bull of 1258 Alexander IV addressed the Franciscan provincials of twenty-two nationalities; and the roster of the Order, as made up in the chapter of 1260 at Narbonne, showed thirty-three provincial ministers, with about a hundred custodies: "Mirum sane quomodo in brevi annorum curriculo universos orbis angulos penetravit humile hoc institutum."—Wadding, *Ad Ann.*, 1260, No. 53. Hurter estimates the Minorites in 1260 as comprising 8,000 monasteries with 200,000 souls: *Innocenz der Dritte*, Vol. IV, p. 227.

the asceticism practiced by the Montanists and by the Spiritual Franciscans, we discover a great divergence in the two systems.

In the first place, the asceticism of the Montanists was a consequence of their apocalyptic tenets. The end of this present world was at hand; the New Jerusalem was about to descend from heaven; *therefore* let the church of Christ be spotless!⁷⁶ Even Tertullian, with whom the expectation of the Parousia was dulled by a generation's delay, still felt the influence of this primal motive of the sect so strongly as to appeal constantly to the "shortness of the time," in support of the increased moral demands of the Paraclete.⁷⁷ This view of morality as a condition for the consummation of the Parousia, as a great dress-rehearsal for the millennial age, necessarily involved a very legalistic conception of ethics. The advent of the Paraclete being as much a part of the complete Christian revelation as the advent of Christ, the commands revealed to men by the Paraclete and his prophets had the force of the commandments of God ("imperium Dei," Tert., *De Jejun.*, 13). It was not a conception of Christian life within the revealed truth of the gospel, but was the programme of a

⁷⁶ There has been more controversy over the relation between the moral precepts and the prophetic oracles of Montanism than over any other question connected with the movement. Unfortunately, the only two authors who have preserved us any knowledge of Montanism in its eastern form, Epiphanius and Eusebius, were both so concerned to prove the movement a heresy that they paid little attention to its discipline. Tertullian, on the other hand, presents us, in his interpretation of Montanism, a system of discipline almost exclusively. We are left, therefore, to reconcile the two views as best we can. Schweigler, in the full spirit of the Tübingen school of theology, saw in Montanism a recrudescence of Ebionism in the church, and found in the doctrine of the Paraclete and the dawn of the new age the mainspring of the movement. Baur modified Schweigler's theory to the extent of denying the connection between Ebionism and Montanism, but still held to the view of the latter as the proclamation of the age of the Paraclete in opposition to the solidifying episcopate on the one hand and to the Gnostic speculations on the other. Other scholars have seen in Montanism a moral revival carried to the pitch of prophecy (Ritschl, Neander, Schaff). My own sympathies are with Baur and those scholars who see in the proximate Parousia the dominant characteristic of Montanism. It seems the sounder view from a psychological standpoint; and, furthermore, among the twenty-one "oracles" of Montanism collected by Bonnwetsch, I find only one that represents the Paraclete as wielding a distinctly moral power: "Ipsum paracletum habes in prophetis novis dicentem, Potest ecclesia donare delictum sed non faciam ne et alia delinquant."—Tert., *De Pudic.*, 21.

⁷⁷ "Deus nunc sub extremitatibus temporum compressit quod miserat et revocavit quod indulerat."—Tert., *De Exhort. Cast.*, 6; "Tempus in collecto," *De Jejun.*, 12; *De Monog.*, 14.

new revelation on a par with, nay, even superior to, the gospel. "Whereas," says Didymus, "the apostle Paul said that now we know in part and prophesy in part, they affirm that Montanus came bringing the perfect knowledge of the Paraclete, to wit, the teaching of the Holy Spirit,"⁷⁸ while Tertullian signals the coming of the Paraclete as the deliverance from the infirmities of the flesh, parallel to the deliverance from sinfulness of heart which was wrought by the advent of Christ.⁷⁹

Under this feverish summons to impeccability, specific ethical cases were handled with a view rather to accumulating as much ascetic virtue as possible against the sounding of the trumpet than to chastening character for the service of one's fellow-men. Marriage is to be despised and its joys the more readily foresworn, because the end of humanity is at hand and both heaven and hell have population enough.⁸⁰ Fasts are chiefly recommended as preparations for the impending judgment day and the reign of the Paraclete in which there is neither eating nor drinking: "If the Eternal God knoweth no hunger, man will be most like God in such time as he lives without food; and, besides, it was eating that caused Adam's fall!" Such is the lofty reasoning of Tertullian!⁸¹ Martyrdom becomes less dreadful, because the lease of life purchased by cowardly flight or by a bribe ("nummaria fuga") may only be a few years, or even a few days. The Paraclete is at hand!⁸² In short, the prophets of Montanism are intent on proclaiming the end of the world and the consequent outpouring of the "last gifts" (τὰ ἔσχατα χαρίσματα). The reward of virtue is so near and so palpable that it becomes a bribe to virtue (Tert., *De Jejun.*, 12). The Christian had better take no risks.

⁷⁸ Didymus, *De Trinitate*, XLI, 2.

⁷⁹ "Regnavit duritia cordis usque ad Christum; regnaverit et infirmitas carnis usque ad Paracletum."—Tert., *De Monog.*, 14.

⁸⁰ Tert., *De Monog.*; *De Exhort. Cast.*; *passim*.

⁸¹ Tert., *De Jejun.*, 6.

⁸² Tert., *De Fuga in Persec.*, *passim*. The exceedingly rare mention of Montanist martyrs (cf. Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 18, 5-9; V, 16, 20) is explicable from the fact that our information as to the early history of the sect comes exclusively from hostile sources. What is martyrdom in the eyes of the persecuted sect is only the penalty for incorrigible stubbornness in the eyes of the persecutors. Only the Catholic victims were allowed the palm of martyrdom. What is "constantia" in the Catholic is only "contumacia" in the heretic! (Augustine.)

Let him not say, "What is not expressly forbidden is permitted," but rather, "All is forbidden that is not expressly permitted."⁸³ The words which occur over and over again in Tertullian's works as synonymous with virtue are purely negative words—"emendare," "resecare," "amputare," "excidere," "temperare," "fugere," "destruere," "deponere."

Now, this academic asceticism of Montanism was entirely different from the spirit of self-denial which we find among the Franciscan zealots. The latter fixed their eyes, not upon the end of the world, but upon the dawn of a new age. Their ascetic discipline was to train them in the virtues which would make them a leaven of spirituality in a carnal world. It was truly a "discipline"—a teaching, a preparation for something better, namely, service; whereas the Montanistic asceticism was not a discipline but a feat of endurance, a final accomplishment. St. Francis' ideal was the imitation of the life of Jesus, and his disciples also were to preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God. I cannot find in the words of St. Francis as reported by the chroniclers a single indication that his ambition was to build up a sect of privileged persons to enjoy the blessings of the millennium. On the contrary, there are many warnings against the spirit of exclusiveness, pride, and preferment,⁸⁴ and cautions against mistaking mere increase in numbers for the accomplishment of the Minorites' purpose.⁸⁵ Thomas of Celano in his *Second Legend* puts into the mouth of St. Francis a prayer of a single sentence, pregnant with the counsel of unostentatious service: "O that it might come to pass that the world should see the Brothers Minor so rarely that it wonder at their fewness." Compare with this Tertullian's boasting: "We it is in whom the centuries have reached their fulness; we, who were destined by God before the creation of the world to be the consummation of the ages."⁸⁶

The disciples of St. Francis, even those who clung most faithfully to his ideal, did not preserve his catholicity of spirit in its full degree.

⁸³ Tert., *De Corona Militis*, 2.

⁸⁴ *Rule of 1221*, chaps. 5, 7, 10, 11, 14.

⁸⁵ Salimbene's curt apostrophe to Elias: "Ah! domine Helya, multiplicasti gentes sed non magnificasti laetitiam."—*Chron.*, p. 404.

⁸⁶ Tert., *De Cultu Feminarum*, II, 9.

The zealots were forced gradually to an attitude of protest and prophecy. Yet for all that, they preserved the saving idea of ascetic practice as training of character for the service of humanity rather than as an end in itself. The apologies of Ubertino da Casale before the committee of Clement V⁸⁷ and of Angelo da Clarino before the tribunal of John XXII⁸⁸ clearly demonstrate the practical character of the Franciscan asceticism. In fact, it was not asceticism at all, in the strict sense of denial for denial's sake, that was the ideal of St. Francis, but rather poverty, the absence of the encumbrance of wealth, that the soul might be single in its devotion to service. For, "in so far as the brothers should desert the standard of poverty, in just so far would the world reject them and they would seek but not find."⁸⁹ In other words, if they yielded to temptations to ease and self-indulgence, they would lose not heaven but the world, not their salvation but their power. This distinction is fundamental. It far outweighs any obvious similarity of ascetic practice such as abstention from meats or misprision of learning.

Perhaps the essential difference between the Montanistic and the Franciscan asceticism is shown most convincingly in the attitude of the two toward marriage. As the attraction of man to woman is the strongest instinct (barring that of self-preservation) in human nature, all systems of philosophy or of religion that have undertaken to crush or train human nature have had this impulse to reckon with. In the early days of the church we can distinguish three progressive stages in the attitude toward marriage. The Essenes, a community of Jewish zealots, rejected marriage entirely; and a branch of Jewish Christianity adopted their extreme doctrine.⁹⁰ A more widely spread, but hardly nobler conception, was that of marriage as the "lesser evil," which was the view of St. Paul (I Cor. 7:2-9), and probably of the apostles generally.⁹¹ The third conception of marriage, which finally prevailed in the church, when provision was made for the ascetics in the institution of monasticism, was that of a solemn

⁸⁷ Ehrle, *Zur Vorgeschichte des Concils von Wien*, A.L.K.G., III, 175.

⁸⁸ Angelo da Clarino, *Epistola Excusatoria*; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁹ Cf. Wadding, *Ad Ann.*, 1226, No. 51.

⁹⁰ The following sentence from the apocryphal *Gospel to the Egyptians* is quoted in Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.*, III, 6): "I have come to destroy the works of the female."

⁹¹ Jesus himself does not discuss the question of marriage and virginity.

compact of mutual fidelity, prefigured by the relation of the church to Christ as bride, and as old at least as the prophet Hosea.

Now we learn from the few notices of eastern Montanism that have come down to us that the sect praised virginity as the ideal state.⁹² Tertullian seems to have combined all three of the views of marriage mentioned in the preceding paragraph. He champions the state of virginity in his *De Exhortatione Castitatis* (chap. 9), adding that the Parousia is near, and that those women will rise more easily from earth to heaven who have no children at their breasts. In the *De Monogamia* Tertullian approves a single marriage, for the same reason St. Paul gives in his first Epistle to the Corinthians; while in the *De Anima* he defends marriage as a divine institution.⁹³ But we have to remember that Tertullian was a champion of the church against heretics as well as a zealot for the ascetic doctrines of Montanism. The rejection of marriage as a pollution of the spirit by the flesh was already one of the fundamental doctrines of the Gnostic-encratic heretics, whose dualism of matter and spirit was the most dangerous the church had to meet in the first three centuries.⁹⁴ The orthodox opinion had to steer a narrow way between the Scylla of luxury and the Charybdis of heresy. Except for the danger of falling into Gnostic dualism, it seems certain that Tertullian would have supported unreservedly the extreme view of the Montanists—the rejection of marriage as an unmitigated and irreparable evil.⁹⁵ Given his contempt for the flesh and his expectation of the Parousia, it was the only logical position for him to take.

The Spiritual Franciscans took quite a different view of marriage. To be sure they, like the rest of the brethren of the order, assumed the vow of chastity with those of obedience and poverty; but they did

⁹² Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 18, 2; Tert., *Adv. Valent.*, 5.

⁹³ "Natura veneranda non erubescenda est. Concubitum libido non condicio foedavit. Excessus non status est impudicus, siquidem benedictus status apud Deum: Crescite et multiplicare. . . ."—Tert., *De Anima*, 27.

⁹⁴ See the elaborate justification of marriage in Tertullian's work against the heretic Marcion, *Adv. Marc.*, IV, 34; V, 7.

⁹⁵ "Haeretici nuptias auferunt, psychici ingerunt. Illi nec semel, isti non semel nubunt. . . . Penes nos autem quos spiritales merito dici facit agnitio spiritualium charismatum continentia tam religiosa est quam licentia verecundia."—Tert., *De Mon.*, 1.

not make it a subject of casuistry. Their abstinence from marriage was like their abstinence from wealth-getting, a freedom from encumbrances on the life of single devotion to deeds of mercy and leisure for prayer and contemplation. If there are one or two passages in which St. Francis expresses a somewhat dualistic view of the flesh,⁹⁶ they are, as Sabatier has said, "momentary obscurations, moments of discouragement when a man is not himself."⁹⁷ The real St. Francis was a lover of nature, who rejoiced in all God's creation, and who saw in the body not an enemy but a brother.⁹⁸ The same contentment and evenness of spirit is evident in the writings of the Spirituals, whose ideal was the imitation of the life of the saint. Their apologies have a note of repose and dignity which comes from absorption in a great and satisfying ideal.⁹⁹ A tangible proof of their liberal position on the question of marriage is furnished in the sympathy which existed between them and the pious laity of the neighborhood about their monasteries. The very name *Fraticelli* was a popular term of endearment given to the zealots in the Mark of Ancona and in Tuscany;¹⁰⁰ and when the negotiations with Clement V failed to bring independence to the Spirituals of Provence, they "withdrew from the persecuting brethren in the convents of Narbonne and Béziers, because the men of those towns held them in great reverence and affection."¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ "Cum majorem inimicum quam corpus non habeam."—II Cel., 3, 63.

⁹⁷ Sabatier, *Vie de Saint François d'Assise* (Eng. transl.), p. 41, n. 2.

⁹⁸ "Cepit hilariter loqui ad corpus, Gaude, frater corpus!"—II Cel. 3, 137.

⁹⁹ "Item paupertas evangelica et regule est totaliter in divinam spem sursum activa, unde est certa de divino promisso, qui sine superflua sollicitudine promittit omnia ministrare."—Ubertino da Casale, *Responsio*, fol. 131b; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁰ The name was first used in John XXII's sweeping bull of condemnation of all heretical sects, issued in 1317, and for that reason has been regarded as a term of opprobrium. But John XXII only copied a term of popular use in his bull. For a discussion of the subject see the author's *The Spiritual Franciscans*, Winthrop Press, N. Y. (1907), note 145.

¹⁰¹ Angelo da Clarino, *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 66b; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*; and Ehrle, *Zur Vorgeschichte des Concils von Wien*, A.L.K.G., III, 195. Father Mandonnet, a Dominican professor of the University of Freiburg, and a man deeply interested in the modern Franciscan movement, argued at the International Scientific Congress at Freiburg, 1897, for the original democratic unity of the whole Franciscan body, out of which came by later differentiation the Minorites, the Clares, and the Tertiaries. The change was effected partly by the church, partly through the natural growth of the order. If M. Mandonnet's theory be right—and it has the commendation of no less a critic of Fran-

The frequent complaint of the order at large that the zealots were attempting to gain power by ingratiating themselves with the people, "sub pallio sanctitatis," substantiates the fact of this cordial relationship, and clearly shows that the ascetic-legalistic proscription of marriage as a sin, or even as a concession to the flesh, was not a doctrine of the Spiritual Franciscans as it was of the Montanists.

Asceticism in stronger or weaker form has been so constant an element of the teaching of the Christian church from the earliest days to the present, that it constitutes no proof in itself, when appearing in almost identical terms in two movements within the church, of the connection or even the remote relation of those movements. In order to prove the connection or the relation of such movements, it would be necessary to prove that the end envisaged in the ascetic practices in question was the same. It is easy, for example, to quote passages almost identical in substance from Tertullian and Angelo da Clarino. On the subject of contempt for learning the former writes (and in an ante-Montanistic work at that), "What have Athens and Jerusalem in common? For us there is no need of study since Christ's advent nor of inquiry since the Gospel."¹⁰² And Angelo writes, "When a man has once received the sufficient work of faith in his heart, the laborious arguments of the wise ones of this world are superfluous and vain: for hath not God made the wisdom of this world folly?"¹⁰³ Yet one cannot fail to see, on careful study of the works of Tertullian and the chiefs of the Spiritual Franciscans, that the former's contempt for learning is of the nature of a forced penance in view of the impending judgment, whereas with the Franciscans worldly wisdom is discouraged as a distraction from the service due the world from the Minorite. With the former the attitude is strictly ascetic, with the latter it is disciplinary.¹⁰⁴ This formula might, with fair approach

ciscan origins than Paul Sabatier (*Revue Historique*, V, 75)—it affords interesting confirmation of the Democratic sympathies of the branch of the Franciscans which held most closely to the doctrines and precepts of the founder. Cf. *Compte Rendu du 4me Congrès* (Frieberg), p. 184.

¹⁰² Tert., *Apolog*, 46.

¹⁰³ Angelo da Clarino, *Hist. Trib.*, fol. 31b; Ehrle, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰⁴ Compare Celano's statement of Francis' attitude toward learning: "Dolebat si virtute neglecta scientia quareretur. Fratres aut mei qui scientiae curiositate ducuntur in die retributionis manus invenient vacuas. Non hoc dicebat quod scripturae

to truth, be applied to the whole range of ascetic practices in the two systems. The simple fact that almost the entire weight of Montanistic emphasis fell on the subjects of fasts and continence (the regulation of the most intense appetites of the flesh), whereas virtue for the Franciscan zealot was summed up in the phrase "voluntary poverty" (freedom from secular distractions), shows the fundamental divergence of the two movements.

Finally, in the nature of the authority which lay behind ascetic practices the Franciscan system differed totally from Montanism. The doctrines of Montanism claimed to be a new, direct revelation from God, superseding the teaching of the gospel.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, the asceticism prescribed by Montanism was binding as a divine decree.¹⁰⁶ It was not recommended or solicited: it was ordained. Maximilla, the prophetess, said: "Listen not to me, but to Christ,"¹⁰⁷ and Tertullian argues in regard to second marriage: "If Christ abrogated divorce, which Moses allowed, why should not the Paraclete forbid second marriage which Paul condoned?"¹⁰⁸ On the other hand the self-denial practiced by the Franciscan zealots was a counsel of perfection recommended and exemplified by St. Francis, contained entirely within the gospel as revealed to the world and intrusted to the church. If the Spiritual Franciscans introduced the prophecies of the third and perfect age about to dawn, it was not as a basis for their ethics (that they had already in the legacy of St. Francis)¹⁰⁹ but rather as a comfort and an encouragement in the face of bitter persecution.

studia displicerent, sed quo a superflua cura discendi universos retraheret et quosque magis charitate bonos quam curiositate sciolos esse vellet."—II Cel., 17, 256.

¹⁰⁵ This view is well illustrated for the earlier forms of Montanism by the quotation from Hippolytus' *Philosophoumena* given above (note 1). But it even persisted in the modified Montanism of Tertullian: "Cum propterea paracletum miserit Deus, ut quoniam humana mediocritas omnia semel capere non poterat paulatim dirigeretur et ordinaretur et ad perfectum perduceretur disciplina ab illo vicario Domini, Spiritu Sancto."—Tert., *De Virg. Vel.*, 1.

¹⁰⁶ "Hunc (Paracletum) quem recipimus, necessario etiam quae tunc constituit observamus."—Tert., *De Jej.*, 13.

¹⁰⁷ Epiph., *Haer.*, XLVIII, 12.

¹⁰⁸ Tert., *De Monog.*, 14.

¹⁰⁹ See the protestations of Angelo, Ubertino, and Olivi in their Apologies and letters, *passim*; e. g., "Solam regulam petimus sicut eam promissimus et beatus Franciscus eam instituit."—Ubertino in Ehrle, *A.L.K.G.*, III, 194.

Although both Montanism and Spiritual Franciscanism then were in their ascetic-enthusiastic features a protest against the secularization of Christianity; although both condemned all forms of indulgence of the flesh and proscribed mundane learning, yet it is inexact to speak of the asceticism of the Franciscans as Montanistic, because it proceeded from a widely different conception of the Christian religion, aimed at a far higher ideal of Christian perfection, and found its sanction and inspiration in the example and precept of a great teacher, rather than in the terrors of an impending cataclysm.